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The Saturday Review of Literature

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Accent on Poetry:

WHAT POETS ARE SAYING
By Malcolm Cowley

"A REVOLUTION IN EUROPEAN POETRY"
By Emery Neff
Reviewed by Irwin Edman

"COLLECTED POEMS"
By Walter De la Mare
and
"RHYMED RUMINATIONS"
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NO TIME FOR POETRY?
An Editorial

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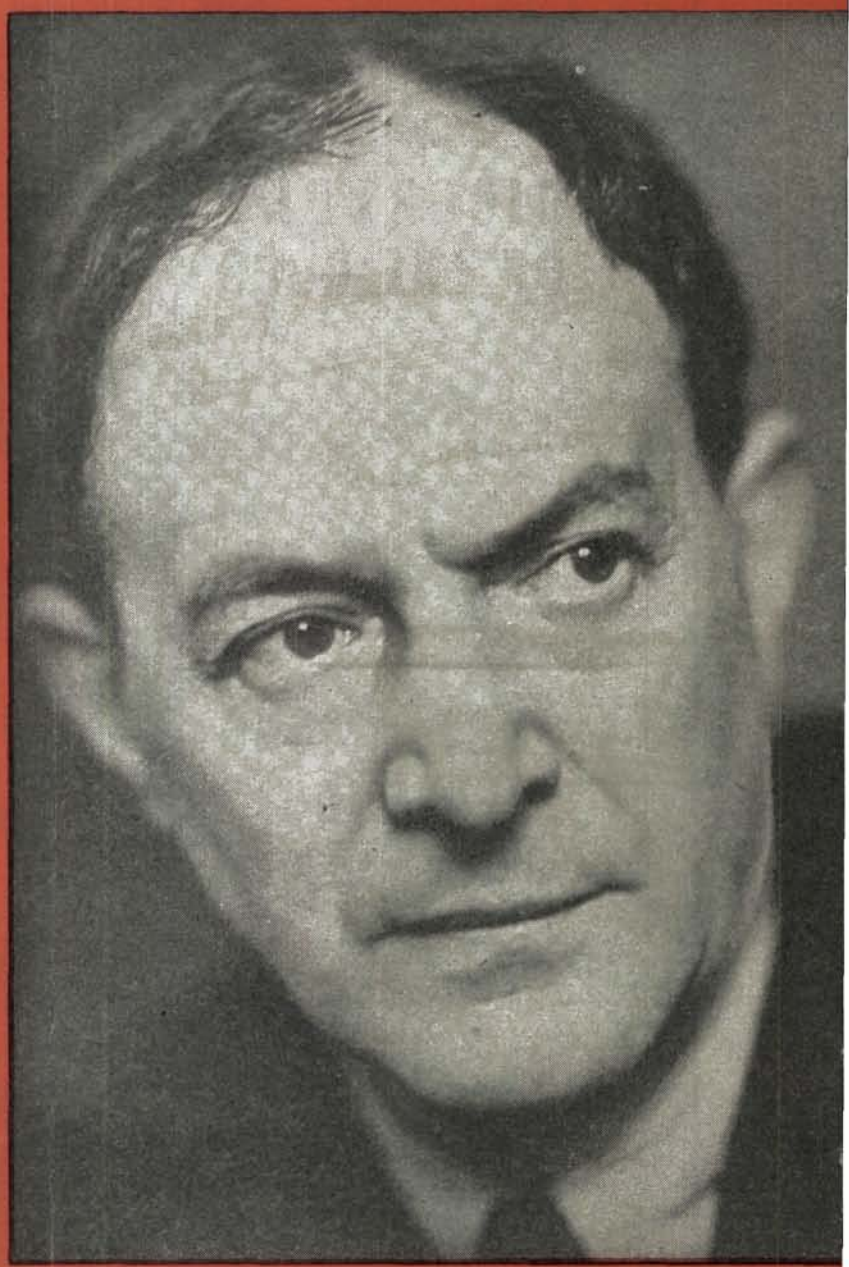

WALTER DE LA MARE "journeys into the terra incognito of time and spaciousness." *(See page 7)*

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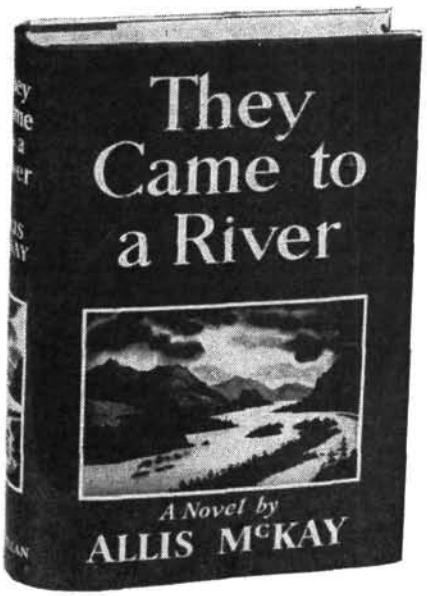

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The Saturday Review of Literature

What Poets Are Saying

MALCOLM COWLEY

W. H. Auden Stephen Spender

PERHAPS the chief reason for predicting a revival of poetry is the critical state of this country and the world. During a crisis, there is more community life in workshops and armies, but the briefer moments of solitude are prized more highly. Individuals are stirred by the public danger, but at the same time they find themselves driven back on their inner resources; on the emotions and memories and aspirations that are naturally expressed in verse. And the situation that encourages the writing of poetry is favorable to its reading as well. There is less opportunity to enjoy novels of a thousand pages or more; these became popular during a period of enforced idleness. In times of crisis, the demand is rather for something short and memorable: a first-hand narrative, an appeal for action, a lyric poem in three or four stanzas. And in such times, one discovers that the admirable workmanship of a poem, even if its mood is sombre, somehow restores one's faith in the value of human effort.

All this explains the revival of interest in poetry that was widely observed in England last year. A similar revival in this country seems to be getting under way, although it is still too soon to be certain. One sign of it is the appearance of articles on poetry like those recently printed in *The Saturday Review of Literature;* critical discussion often precedes creation. Another sign is that, for the first time in I don't know how many years, a narrative poem has stayed persistently at or near the top of the best-seller lists. Although "The White Cliffs" does not indicate any new direction among poets, it obviously reveals a change in their audience. But the poets also are changing, to judge by the work submitted for magazine publication. Several editors, myself among them, began to notice in 1940 that more of the manuscripts they read seemed interesting and alive. The poets had been finding something different to say.

In comparison with the present, the 1930's in America already seem to have been a rather drab period for the art of verse. It is true that a number of interesting poets appeared in this country—Horace Gregory, Kenneth Fearing, Josephine Miles, Winfield Townley Scott, Muriel Rukeyser, Maria Zaturenska, Delmore Schwartz, Elizabeth Bishop, Ben Belitt, and Edwin Rolfe, to mention only a few. These and others have done sound work in the past and can be depended upon to do more of it in the future. Yet since Hart Crane's "The Bridge," in the spring of 1930, there has not been published a single volume of poems that greatly altered or expanded our picture of American literature. And during the same time there has been somewhat more, I think, than the usual proportion of dull or pretentious or totally misdirected poetical writing.

It is a question why American poets accomplished so little during the 1930's, as compared with American novelists or autobiographers. Perhaps their chief difficulty was the conflict between the subjects they wanted to write about and the literary tradition in which they insisted on writing. The subjects were drawn largely from the world of political struggles and social movements. The tradition was that of the hermetic poets—Eliot most of all, but after him Pound, Hopkins, Cummings, and Crane—all of them Symbolists, all bent on crowding an infinity of allusions into every phrase. Crane once sent a letter of five closely typewritten pages to the editor of *Poetry,* explaining what he had intended to say in a poem of four short stanzas called "Melville's Tomb"; Miss Monroe had accused him of writing nonsense. The letter was a lucid and eloquent statement of his intentions; it proved that each of the poem's sixteen lines was an extraordinary collection of telescoped images. But it also proved that "Melville's Tomb" could appeal only to an audience patient enough to search for his meanings; or at most and worst to an audience of snobs who thought they could understand it intuitively, or liked to be mystified. Yet similar methods were being employed all during the 1930's by poets who were hoping to express the aspirations of struggling humanity, and who even dreamed of being read by the masses.

From their experience, some critics have drawn the lesson that it is impossible to write good verse about political subjects. That view is at least short-sighted, considering that such verse has been written almost since the beginning of literature. Most of the great Latin poets were politicians of a sort. Blake and Shelley, Heine,

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Baudelaire, Swinburne, and Rimbaud, all are represented in anthologies of revolutionary poetry. But the amount of good political verse produced in the 1930's was surprisingly small, considering the widespread hopes of a proletarian revolution. Looking back on the decade, one feels that the "social" poets would have been more effective if they had used suitable techniques —for example, those of ballad or folksong or Skeltonian doggerel or neat Swiftian satire. Interesting poems of all these types were actually written by W. H. Auden, with his talent for adapting old methods to contemporary themes. Too many poets, however, wanted to be not only social but symbolist as well—which is like saying that they wanted to make public proclamations in a private language, or whisper confidentially to a crowd.

And there were other reasons, as the decade went on, for the general absence of good verse. A set of beliefs that began by opening new horizons had ended by becoming as rigid and confining as the dogmas of older faiths. Certain inconsistencies in those beliefs were not to be noticed, or if noticed were not to be put into words. Certain ideas were not to be questioned. Certain feelings were almost compulsory, even if they could be felt only with the tips of the nerves and expressed only in terms of political rhetoric. It is no wonder that some poets became unconscious hypocrites—which is to say that they wrote bad verse—and that others ceased writing entirely.

But the situation has changed during the last two or three years. The Marxian dogmas have ceased to exert much influence on poetry, nothwithstanding the place they still hold in political thinking. As yet no other dogmas have taken their places, even though one can see the shadow of new orthodoxies just over the horizon. Poets feel more at liberty to follow their instincts and, in particular, to deal with the inner world that many of them had been neglecting. For ten years, a great deal of American poetry had consisted of private speech about public matters. More of it deals with private matters today, but in a somewhat more public fashion.

Meanwhile the literary traditions of the new era are more in harmony with the subjects that poets are treating. The writers most generally praised are Yeats, Auden, Kafka; and the influence exerted by all of them seems for the moment healthy. Yeats's later verse, with its short, clean, deceptively simple lines and its use of concrete images, is an admirable model to follow. Auden, with his ability to write in different styles, is a literature in himself; behind him one glimpses a whole line of dead English poets and a group of poets now writing, not to mention a body of philosophical ideas still unfamiliar in this country. As for the novelist Franz Kafka, his influence on poets has been to free their imaginations. I cannot remember a time at which American verse was so full of impossible but compelling dreams and visions.

BUT if it be admitted that conditions are favorable for a poetry revival, and even that such a revival is now beginning, what is its nature likely to be? In particular, what are the new poets saying? Are they as difficult and as far from ordinary life as many poets of the 1920's? Does their work offer any reward to the average intelligent reader?

As the best way of answering these questions, I had once thought of drawing up a simple outline explaining to the best of my ability what each of several poets was trying to tell us. It would not have been an impossible plan to carry out, considering that most of the new poets have pretty definite ideas about themselves and the world, but it might have proved monotonous. I soon found that the messages of different poets, if printed side by side, would bear too much resemblance to one another; fundamentally many of them were the same message. That isn't because the poets are lacking in personality or write in the same style—they aren't and don't—but rather because many of them have had the same reactions to the same sort of world. Such being the case, I decided to follow another method. Instead of treating the poets one by one—first Auden, then George Barker, then Frederic Prokosch, then Richard Eberhart, then Randall Jarrell, Weldon Kees, Harry Brown, and so down the list—I would mention a few of the motives or themes or basic ideas that appear in the work of several writers. An outline of this second type would read somewhat as follows:

The Sense of Doom.—Most of the writers mentioned above seem to feel that a revolution is in progress which will violently put an end to everything good and bad in their familiar world. A few years ago, the word "revolution" suggested hope; but what it now suggests to them is apathy or despair. The fate that rules the immediate future is pictured as a huge automaton striding through heaps of the slain, or perhaps—and both these images are from the same poet, Randall Jarrell —it is a gas-masked machine gunner:

> Our times lie in the welded hands,
> Our fortune in the rubber face—
> On the gunner's tripod, black with oil,
> Spits and gapes the pythoness.

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Accent on Poetry

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The Awakening of European Poetry

IRWIN EDMAN

LITERARY scholarship and literary criticism in this country have too often been strangers to each other, and when they have had a nodding acquaintance, there has been mutual suspicion. The literary scholars have been impatient with the easy generalizations and the temporal provincialism of the reviewers. The serious critics—they are not many—have been impatient of the irrelevant pedantries, the lack of general ideas, the indifference to genuinely aesthetic issues, of the literary historians. Dates and origins have seemed to obsess the historians; a parade of transient discoveries of momentary masterpieces has obsessed the reviewers. Even where there have been evidences of critical ideas, those ideas have been casual, uninformed by historical reservation, undefined by any cultural background of more than twenty years. It is invidious to name names; but one may say in all justice that there have been exceptions. It would be perhaps not too invidious to mention Lionel Trilling's "Matthew Arnold" as an example of what can be done when history and criticism reinforce each other. Edmund Wilson and Van Wyck Brooks have shown in different ways how literary scholarship and critical analysis may keep house in the same tenement of clay.

But the rarity of the combination makes a book that manages to be both a contribution to scholarship and to criticism at one and the same time something to celebrate. One of the rarest things, however, among English speaking critics, is a true sense of comparative literature, and a discernment of the relation of ideas to their setting, and of the way in which ideas function in a work of literature. When one comes, therefore, upon a work* that brings to bear a knowledge of three or four literatures, and of the cultures of which they are the expression, and this is combined with a patent concern for poetic qualities, and discriminations, it is time to make that work the occasion of extended comment. For the book here under discussion is a happy portent for American criticism. For in it that happens which is very rare: the fruitful meeting of art and the academy. Criticism and scholarship are both gainers, and since informed and sensitive criticism creates a climate of discernment, current literature may be said to be the gainer thereby as well.

Professor Neff's book arrests attention by the very first page of its introduction, for here the reader is at once given evidence that he is in the presence of a lover of good poetry and a writer of good prose. He is introduced to the mind of a man who obviously knows that English poetry never was an insulated island, but that it affected and reflected the whole of the poetry of Europe. This book, relatively short and for all its learning, modest and simple, contributes in a striking and original way to what, in his quotation from Balzac, is "the genius of admiration, of comprehension, the sole faculty whereby an ordinary man becomes the brother of a great poet."

Mr. Neff calls attention, in the first place, to the shocking provincialism of the study of poetry, and the necessity for correcting the distortion in our view of European poetry or, for that matter, of English poetry, which even Americans tend to see through British eyes. His paragraph on that point, which is decisive for his whole enterprise, is well worth quoting:

> To see European literature through British eyes, is not always to have the best perspective. The distortion is likely to be considerable in regard to the poetry of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in which the chief movements were French and German and the greatest figure was not British. Yet since English is the first, and because of language barriers frequently the only, European poetry known to them, Americans are disposed to accept English opinion of its relative importance.

It is hard to describe this book without failing to communicate its quality and its effect. What renders it important is not the fact that it is an excellent handbook, beautifully and tactfully furnished with quotations, accompanied by translations, often original, from three centuries of European poetry. It would be delightful to browse through for the quotations alone. But the significance of the book lies in something else. Mr. Neff reinstates the study of literature, by professors of English and by students, into two important contexts. The first has already been noted: the relations of Italian, French, English, and German poetry to one another. The second context is the relation of all these national poetries to the general social and intellectual movements of which they were the echoes, the voices, or, in some instances, the prophecies and premonitions. Mr. Neff's book is, in other words, a contribution to the art of criticism. For his discussion is a beautifully lucid illustration of the way in which social and intellectual history may be brought to bear on the understanding and, through the understanding, on the enjoyment of poetry.

For it must be emphasized that, for all the compact incorporation of many social facts and much philosophical analysis into this book, Mr. Neff does not make the mistake so often made by literary historians. He does not confuse origins with values, nor the ideas or the subject matter of poetry with poetry itself. Thus, though in his first chapter, "Tradition and Reason," Mr. Neff gives a remarkably chiselled and succinct account of the background of French classical taste in the "great century of Louis the Fourteenth," he does not end with sketching in the court and the causes of its becoming a literary center. He does not end with an analysis of the manners and the morals of the aristocracy and the upper middle classes, and their economic origins. He gives, with delicate precision, the quality of the art which these circumstances helped to generate in Racine, and the canons of criticism which they helped produce in Boileau. It can hardly be put better than in his own careful words:

> Tragedy . . . mirrored the taste of Louis's court: traditional, authoritarian, rationalistic, rather literal-minded.
>
> To Jean Racine, these conditions were not cramping, but rather conducive to the fullest play of his genius. Like his audience, he satisfied a need for verisimilitude by limiting plots to one place and, as closely as possible, to the time required to act them. . . . He shared the passion of his audience for symmetry and logic, its distaste for irrelevance

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A REVOLUTION IN EUROPEAN POETRY, 1660-1900. Emery Neff. New York: Columbia University Press. 1940. 279 pp. $3.

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Contemplative Poet

THE ARROW AT THE HEEL. By Raymond Holden. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1940. 110 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by ELIZABETH DREW

POETS may perhaps be divided into those who have a feeling *for* words and those who think *with* words: those who illustrate their themes with telling images and those who make the images themselves create the intensity of the intellectual or sensuous excitement. The weakness of the first kind is that their verses tend to lack concentration and force; to be description of experience in decorative language: the weakness of the second, that in an effort at economy and activity, the "meaning" eludes the reader, and the experience itself is not communicated at all.

Mr. Holden is, in the main, a poet of the first type, but, like most poets, is at his best when he fuses the two. In "Peony," there is enough statement to clarify the situation, but the interaction of idea, emotion, and sensuousness which creates its impact, are the result of "the logic imagination."

Peony, peony, flesh flower, heavy bowl,
Bent under the rain's water earthward,
You are a face to lift in the two hands
Against the thin bone covering this soul.

Peony, peony, one who is in drouth
May take from the rain for his body nothing.
Flower of heavy flesh, be tolerant
Of that small ruse that makes your bud a mouth.
Where would he go, in whom no rain unfurls
The arid balance of arrangement—
Unless toward gone and useless breezes—
But your flesh, familiar of a girl's?

Many of Mr. Holden's poems are on the theme of the stability of nature contrasted with the restlessness of man, made

Out of the jerks and starts of matter and light
In their unplotted motion towards the night.

Man's hope is to root himself in the knowledge of nature's harmony, and in her calmness to lose the agony of his egotism: to realize that life is *process,* "Truth is in motion, not in forms and shapes"; man but part

of the elect
Established ferment to infect
Life with new life.

But like the elements and their innumerable compounds, man himself can be "newly composed, though made of nothing new." These ideas are communicated in very sensitive, though undramatic verse. Mr. Holden is a poet of contemplation; of that human flesh "that with the tongue of reason licks its wounds"; and his flowing rhythms and careful diction tend to become a little monotonous. This is particularly true of the sequence of fifty sonnets which concludes the book. The effect of an engrossing happy love, when the lover is in the condition of "my seven day world your heart," can be extraordinarily numbing, and Mr. Holden's sustained note of dignified bliss is too sedate to communicate the reality of his passion. Nor is there any

Raymond Holden

change when loss replaces possession. The ideas that love is not Time's fool, and that it does not alter when it *alteration* finds, are conveyed with the same cloying and impeccable propriety, with limp images making half-hearted gestures towards half-realized associations. This poetic low-blood-pressure is disappointing, because there is one poem in the book which shows that Mr. Holden can write with direct and ardent feeling. In "Storm Over Rockefeller Center" the incisive and fiery octosyllabics create all that is missing in the sonnets:

Infuriating air, blow, blow,
While we move shiftlessly below,
Looking up through a stinging tear
At that false tower, lost in fear
Of what will happen to us when
The unbuilt things catch up with men—
When the loose house of living falls
And frees the vermin in its walls,
And time, grown eager to regain
The gift it put into the brain,
Comes knocking at the ransacked skull
And finds it empty, the purse full.

Elizabeth Drew is the author of "Directions in Modern Poetry."

MacNeice on Yeats

THE POETRY OF W. B. YEATS. By Louis MacNeice. New York: Oxford University Press. 1941. 242 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

Reviewed by DUDLEY FITTS

IN his recent "Modern Poetry" Louis MacNeice showed himself to be a sensitive, engaging, and not particularly profound critic. His enthusiasm was infectious, he never talked anything but sound sense; and although he never got very far from the surface of things, what he had to say was generally illuminating. The same qualities distinguish this study of Yeats. It is not a profound study, nor does it pretend to be; it avoids most of the complexities of its enormous subject, and contents itself mostly with exposition.

Of all possible people, Louis MacNeice would seem best fitted to write about Yeats. He is an Irishman, and, like Yeats, a Protestant Irishman; and he is a poet. Yet, possibly for this very reason, this book is disappointing. It is good talk, but it is casual, as though the author were so familiar with his subject that he assumed an equal familiarity on the part of the reader. Too much is dismissed with a neat paragraph or an *entre-nous* allusion. A typical example is the discussion of the Easter Rising of 1916, of Yeats's connection with it and the effect it had upon his later work: it looks documented, and the names and facts are certainly there; but I have heard Padraic Colum, in an evening's conversation, bring these same facts and names to life in a way that is not done here. There is no lack of insight, but the writing is so superficial, so anecdotal, that it never rises far above sympathetic gossip. When it comes to the analysis of the poetry itself, Mr. MacNeice is more convincing; but even here his method is expository rather than analytical. He describes poems admirably, points out certain felicities or defects, and there he usually stops; and while the jaunt has been entertaining and instructive, one feels that it has yielded us rather less of Yeats than we get from Cleanth Brooks's analysis of "Byzantium."

The best study of Yeats is still Edmund Wilson's essay in "Axel's Castle." The definitive book is yet to be written; and I suspect that it will be the work not of one man, but of several, and that it will be years before this very great poet can be seen in the proper perspective. Meanwhile, here is an unpretentious and charmingly written celebration of poetry, a sincere gesture of affection and belief.

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Two English Poets

REVIEWED BY LOUIS UNTERMEYER

COLLECTED POEMS. By Walter De la Mare. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 327 *pp.* 1941. $3.75.

WALTER DE LA MARE was a paradox among the Georgian poets of the first two decades of this country. His range was, seemingly, more limited than any of his colleagues; yet his imaginative power touched the extremes of tenderness and terror. John Freeman, Edmund Blunden, Martin Armstrong, John Drinkwater, Edward Shanks, and particularly W. H. Davies cultivated a studied innocence, an air of continual wonder. De la Mare always avoided the superficial charm of naïveté. To the bland bucolics of the period, he opposed a troubled timelessness; instead of their simple factualness he offered a subtle fancy which alternated between whimsicality and half-suppressed tragedy.

The omnibus "Collected Poems" displays, more effectively than any of De la Mare's separate volumes, the poet's creation of his own limbo, a fitful region between the natural and the supernatural world. It might be objected that three hundred and twenty-seven pages occupied chiefly by short imaginative lyrics is too much of a mystical muchness, but the picture of a man and his world would be incomplete if it were more carefully "selected." The defects of the book are, curiously enough, defects of omission. The six volumes here assembled comprise all of De la Mare's poems "for adult readers"—which means that "Peacock Pie" has been omitted. This is a pity, for "Peacock Pie" contains poems which (like "The Song of the Mad Prince" and "The Song of Finis," to name only two) are not only among De la Mare's best, but as distinctly "adult" as many in the present collection.

What is the fabulous world which De la Mare has made? It is the world of a neo-Gothic romancer lost in the actual present, a world of ghosts—ghosts which are often more plausible than living beings—of unfulfilled longings and unhappy memories, of disturbed reactions and recalled scenes in which the very landscape is haunted. It is a curiously remembering quality which characterizes De la Mare. He is spellbound by the magic of dreams—his "Behold, This Dreamer" is the largest anthology ever published about dreams "so various in their shocking disregard of our tastes and ideals"—fascinated by the borderland between hallucination and true vision, by the conflict between the outer event and the inner eye, by mystery *as* mystery. It is as if De la Mare, unable to remain a child, so feared adult reality that his whole work becomes a defense against it, a retreat into bittersweet remembrances of things past, into a domain—half faery fantasy, half nightmare reality.

It is in this hushed and recessive mood that De la Mare triumphs. Whether he is examining the extrarational, or harking back to irresponsible childhood and irresistible romance, or exploring territories of spec-

Siegfried Sassoon

tral solitude, his poetry is soaked in a pervasive and musical melancholy. It is too easy to say, as has been said, that De la Mare has so perfected his manner that the manner now controls him. There are signs in the later poems that indicate a breaking through the pattern and a widening of the gamut; "In the Dock," "The Last Chapter," and "A Prayer" do not depend on accomplished devices and a proved artistry, but are the expressions of a full experience. De la Mare's "motto" may be found in a verse from the old anonymous "Tom o' Bedlam."

> With a host of furious fancies
> Whereof I am commander;
> With a burning spear,
> And a horse of air,
> To the wilderness I wander.

It is as a determined "knight of ghosts" that De la Mare journeys into the terra incognito of time and spaciousness. He is one of the poets who have ventured "ten leagues beyond the wide world's end" and have returned to tell us something incredible yet, somehow, believable about that uncharted universe.

RHYMED RUMINATIONS. By Siegfried Sassoon. New York: The Viking Press. 1941. 56 *pp.* $1.50.

THIS is the kind of small collection which English poets used to have printed privately for circulation among their friends. Composed chiefly of "occasional pieces," a few of the pages seem to call for a wider audience—and privacy is exchanged for a limited publicity. Small though the present volume may be, it gives the reader a fairly clear picture of what an anti-militarist war-poet has been doing in the last eight or nine years. He has, it is evident from the contents, retired to the countryside in the south of England, he has lived quietly ruminating on prehistoric burials and imminence of bombers at Stonehenge, he has married and has become the father of a son, he has seen England rearm for a bigger and a bitterer war. Brief though the book is and confined in its locale, it ranges widely in tone and spirit. The first few poems have the accent of Thomas Hardy, whom Sassoon nas always admired; the last few recall Rupert Brooke, Sassoon's romantic opposite. It is strange to hear the once angry protester against all war declaring:

> None are exempt from service in this hour;
> And vanquished in ourselves we dare not be. . . .
> In every separate soul let courage shine—
> A kneeling angel holding faith's front-line.

But these are strange and desperate times when the pacifist turns militant patriot and division spells death.

Not even Sassoon's most consistent admirers would insist that this volume increases his poetic stature. But it can be claimed that it rounds out the portrait of the man. The poems occasioned by the birth and growth of his son, especially "Meeting and Parting," are not only tender but probing. The others are a little resigned, a little remote, but never without the poet's fundamental consciousness. No better characterization could be offered than Sassoon's own title.

The first branch of The New York Public Library to be devoted exclusively to children and young people, the new Nathan Straus library, has just been opened in New York.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature
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NO TIME FOR POETRY?

IT may be wondered why *The Saturday Review,* at a time such as this, should put special stress on poets and poetry. The stampede back to the Dark Ages is gaining size and momentum, and some may feel that this is hardly the occasion for literary refinements; indeed, some may consider it a fair question to ask whether poets and writers might not be of greater service right now in defense factories sewing together parachutes or fastening bomb racks onto planes.

No one can deny that it takes something more than a quatrain to stop a seventy-ton tank dead in its tracks. But though the wave of the future will be too crowded with buckles and bonds to permit of anything as unfettered and creative as poetry—including perhaps even the accomplished verse from the same pen that gave it its name—it would be foolish to say that just because the language of poetry is beyond the ken of the opposing forces that it has no place or value for us. This very inability of the wave to fathom or sustain poetry should in itself be enough cause for us to relish it and prize it all the more.

Poetry can hardly be without some use today when it can be called on by the leaders of free culture in order to express, as Wordsworth put it, the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings." It is no coincidence that the chief executives of the democratic states have thus on several memorable occasions quoted from poetry while the chief executioners of the totalitarian states have never strayed beyond bombast. It is difficult to imagine a more awkward place for poetry than in the mouths of Herrs Hitler, Goering, and Goebbels—even including passages from the Nibelungenlied or from Tyrtaeus, whose stanzas ought to have enough kill-your-neighbor spirit for any dictator. On the other hand, who among those listening some weeks ago to the overseas broadcast of the British Prime Minister can soon forget the use of the historic quotation from Longfellow sent to Mr. Churchill by the President as a message of hope and faith:

> . . . Sail on, O Ship of State,
> Sail on, O Union, strong and great.
> Humanity with all its fears,
> With all the hopes of future years,
> Is hanging breathless on thy fate!

And only last Sunday, the Prime Minister ended a moving talk with a passage from Arthur Hugh Clough's "Say Not the Struggle Naught Availeth":

> For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
> Seem here no painful inch to gain;
> Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
> Comes silent, flooding in, the main.
>
> And not by eastern windows only,
> When daylight comes, comes in the light;
> In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly!
> But westward, look, the land is bright!

Even as Mr. Churchill uttered these words, a newly unfurled swastika hung over the Acropolis, marking the latest advance of the philosophy of the sledge-hammer, and dramatizing as never before the nature of the struggle, as moving mountains of steel ground down the sacred soil on which democracy first grew. It was here that poetry received not only its name but recognition and distinction as the highest of the arts. But somewhere in Athens, perhaps on the plains of Marathon, the legions of the jackal will come across a passage from Alcaeus that has lived twenty-five hundred years:

> What constitutes a State?
> Not high-raised battlement or laboured mound,
> Thick Wall or moated gate;
> Nor cities fair, with spires and turrets crowned:
> No!—Men, high-minded men . . .
> Men who their duties know,
> Know too their rights, and knowing, dare maintain;
> Prevent the long-aimed blow,
> And crush the tyrant, while they rend the chain.

N. C.

Cotton Fever

By Fred Ross

'LONG the road on either side,
Cotton's green and two miles wide,
Fields fan out in rows string-straight
An' a boll flings out his fleecy bait
An' grins at me an' seems to say,
"You'll be grabbin' at me one day
At six bits a hunderd weight!"

Then the bolls start rustlin', shoutin' in the air,
Just like as if they was callin' off a square:
"Chase that possum, chase that coon,
Chase that cotton-boll roun' the moon.
Crawl down a row an' stan' up straight
On a six-bit whirl fer a hunderd weight.
You can live on the lan' till the day you die
Jus' as long as you leave when the crop's laid by.
So hunker on along an' grabb'er all aroun'—
Payin' the man for the use of his groun';
Lint's stacked up in a record yield,
Gin's chuck full, so gin 'er in the field.
So pick 'er on down to the end in the gloam,
Then pick up yer sack an' promenade home;
Meet yer baby, pat him on the head;
Feed him on beans an' a piece of corn-bread.
When you go back yonder he'll go freight
At jus' six-bits a hunderd weight."

An' so I mosey down the hill,
Cotton bolls a callin' still:
"At Long Row's End, de Boss Man wait,
Nail you up in a wooden crate;
At six-bits a hunderd livin's hard,
By dyin's dear in the county-yard,
At twenty-five bucks a hunderd weight!"

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Adjectives and Whodunits

SIR:—In your issue of April 5, Judge Lynch, the scintillating appraiser of whodunits, turns the statistics on those of the last quarter. 91 were published, he says, including the Ghastly, the Unmentionable, Eleven. Of the total "about 20 per cent is really good stuff." Statistics are unreliable; he says so, and I believe it. But I am tempted to turn them back on him. For I have often wondered, as my eye ran over his choice and varied epiphets, seldom two alike, how so many current mysteries can be so good. Can the level of these fly-by-nights, here today and gone tomorrow, really be so high? Let us look.

In the *SRLs* of last January, February, and March Judge Lynch placed 70 titles in his coveted boxes. (Yes, I know that the novels *published* in those months may not be the same as those he *reviews* during the same time, but there should not be much difference.) Ergo, he names only the best, and leaves out not only the Ghastly Eleven, but other mediocrities. Well and good; but yet, 20 per cent of 91 is 18.2. Does he give high praise to only 18? Not so; by my reckoning, he rates 30 titles outstanding. At least, I should say that when a novel earns such a term as "Class A," "For connoisseurs," "Extra Good," "Stellar honors," "High grade," "Commendable," "Good thriller," "Top drawer," "Yes, *sir*," etc., etc., it is "really good stuff." By my reckoning, also, only some 14 of his qualifiers indicate something average to poor.

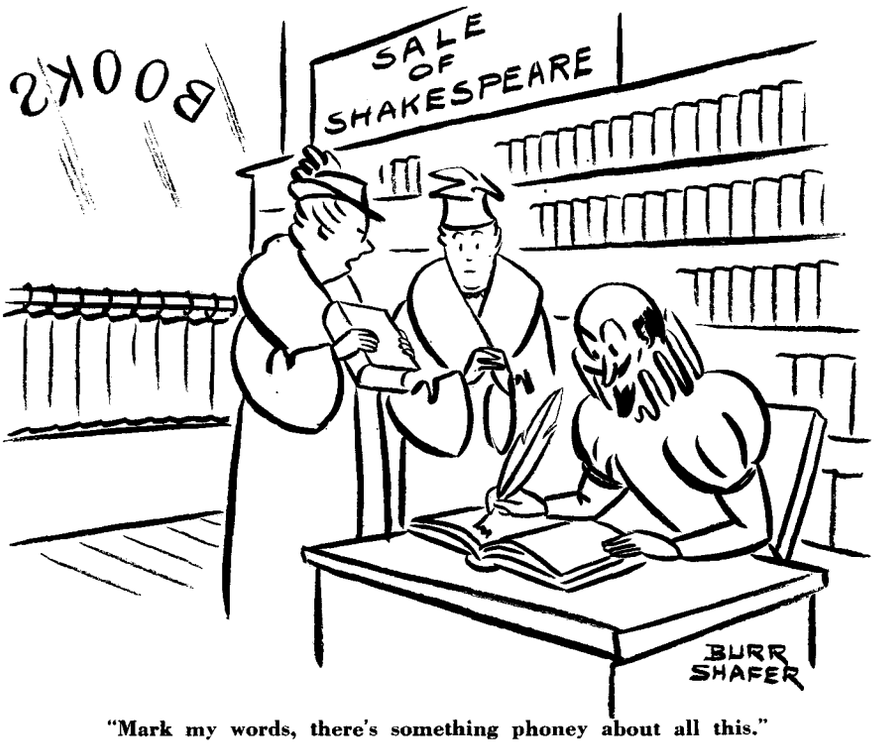
Now, I understand perfectly that Judge Lynch avoids mention of the items he would rank as "punk," "stale," "fishy," if he stooped to use such terms. Enough that he must read them; he has a right to dodge, along with libel suits, the insipid chore of typing out their titles. But does not the Judge's enthusiasm run away with his severity? 30 per cent high quality? He is not Judge Lynch, he is Master Goodheart.

Now, I myself am no judge of whodunits. I seldom read them, finding other diversions more entertaining and relaxing. I drive a car in traffic to quiet my nerves, and usually put myself to sleep with a copy of *The Nation*. Mysteries have been running so long that the search for an unused solution leads very far from possible reality. So I am the last person to challenge Judge Lynch. I should not raise the little issue at all, did it not seem to me a microcosm of the whole world of book-reviewing.

If we run through a few issues of the *SRL* of five years back, of ten years back, what do we find? One novel after another rated as "splendid," "soundly philosophic," "surely the best of the year"; the historical works are "exciting and significant," the travelogues "monumental efforts." Where are these titles now? Does this country actually produce so many masterpieces that they drop into oblivion by the score? Or are reviewers loath to apply universal standards to what arrives at their desks? Certainly they are entitled to pass in silence over the weakest. But also, your subscriber is entitled to a genuinely critical guide.

S. G. MORLEY.

Berkeley, Calif.



"Mark my words, there's something phoney about all this."

Movies and History

SIR:—Your magazine recently published a very timely letter by Oswald Garrison Villard criticising the picture "Santa Fe Trail," which greatly misrepresented the life of John Brown. It is to be hoped that Mr. Villard and many others will continue to raise their voices in a mighty protest against the distortion of historical figures and facts in the pictures. So many great people and events in history have been so grossly misrepresented. This, in a measure, is most dangerous to the young, who often get an impression which will be as lasting as it is false. To the grown ups it is nothing less than an insult to their intelligence and education to see a historical picture which is a very poorly presented history lesson to say the least. Educational groups should put this protest into real action and demand that history and people should be presented with truth. Is it possible that the picture producers do not know that truth is not only stranger than fiction but far more dramatic?

(MRS.) FLORENCE MUNSAN.

Jersey City, N. J.

Show of Hands, Please

SIR:—I guess no one has said anything about it because there is a fear he may be alone in his ignorance, but I see no point in kidding ourselves any further—the *SRL* Literary I. Q. quiz is too difficult, and it's about time all of us came out into the open and admitted it. I'm not the literary moron these quizzes make me out to be and I'm sure the same holds true for my fellow readers, if only they wouldn't be afraid to say so.

FRANKLIN YOUNG.

Cambridge, Mass.

Information, Please

SIR:—I am writing a book about Clyde Fitch and the New York of his time. I am especially anxious to get in touch with people who may have known Mr. Fitch socially, or worked with him in his productions. I am also eager to get a fuller list of theses that may have been written about him, and letters that may have been unpublished.

NEWTON TAYLOR.

New York City.

SIR:—I wonder if you could help me run down this quotation: "A republic if we can keep it." I think Willkie used this in his campaign and that he said Franklin said it during or after the Constitutional Convention. I am not interested in whether Willkie used it. I want to find out whether Franklin said it, when he said it, and where, and how.

FLORENCE SELBY.

Eagle, Idaho.

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Westchester and the Revolution

THE NEUTRAL GROUND. By Frank O. Hough. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1941. 526 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

IT'S a placid country, now, but it wasn't always so placid. The streamlined cars swoop up and down the great parkways; the modified-Dutch-Colonial-salt-box houses, complete with oil-burner, forsythias, and first mortgage, are neat against the evening when the commuters return. But in "The Neutral Ground," Frank O. Hough recalls another and different Westchester—the fertile county of big estates, bad roads, and poor tenant farmers that was torn apart and ravaged by that First American Civil War that we call the American Revolution.

Mr. Hough, a practised novelist, builds up his background skillfully. Two months after Lexington and Concord, Westchester itself was calm and peaceful. Already, some of the great families were picking one side and some the other, but weather and crops were still the chief concern of the farmers bound to the soil. Even in New York City itself, the crowds that turned out to cheer George Washington were just as ready to turn out and cheer Governor Tryon. "In short, I doubt if there is a region anywhere in the Colonies more indifferent to the struggle that is developing and less prepared to face the issue should it be forced upon us," said Sam Hilton, the solid young squire of Hilton Manor, to his more dashing friend, Rob Trowbridge. And, of course, he and Rob were sure to be friends no matter how they differed in politics. But, once the wind rises, men's resolves are straws in the wind.

Rob Trowbridge joined Montgomery and the Continental Line. Sam Hilton went with Rogers's Rangers—like many a Loyalist, he had been willing to support the Continental Congress in its protests against Parliament, but to him the Declaration of Independence, if carried out, would mean the end of the America he had known. Both men were honest, both fought well, both suffered in more than the body. In between stood the Van Drusens—including the beautiful Catherine—insisting that they were neutral and willing to receive either side if they could be let alone, at "Neutrality Hall." They weren't, in the end, due to Mrs. Van Drusen and the sinister Maxwell Bartlet—and the war rolled over them, too.

An exciting story in itself—and there is plenty of excitement—"The Neutral Ground" is distinguished by the even-handedness with which Mr. Hough deals with both sides of the quarrel, and by the characterization of the chief male figures. He denies idealism to neither of his heroes. He does not gloss the deficiencies of the Colonial militia. He shows Rogers sober—and Rogers drunk. And he shows the wear of war—the war of foraging and ambush, of burned houses and homeless refugees that is bound to happen when the lines sway back and forth and people are caught between them. Sam Hilton, the idealist, finds his tenants killed by his own soldiers. Rob Trowbridge, desperately struggling with the aid of the hardbitten Westchester Guides, to keep the Lines in being, finds himself turned into "a combination policeman, horse thief and master spy." And, after the war is over, Lieutenant-Colonel Trowbridge finds his title no asset in re-establishing himself in civil life—and Sam Hilton must seek a new life in Nova Scotia. Yet, for all his realism, Mr. Hough does not weight his dice. Much, very much has been broken—and a new nation made.

The larger historical figures who enter the book come in plausibly and naturally. There are excellent sketches of Burr and Arnold, a good portrait of Rogers, a really first-class one of Washington. The Westchester Guides are admirably handled and the development of Abe Kronkhyte from country bumpkin to cool, daring, and ruthless partisan is excellently done. The women are much more conventional—Catherine Van Drusen is dashing enough but no Scarlett O'Hara, and the conclusion that brings her to Rob's arms at last is forced and melodramatic. Ellen Hilton is an amiable shadow but not much more, and some of the earlier pages of the book are overloaded with exposition. Neither as long nor as comprehensive as "Oliver Wiswell" and lacking something of Mr. Roberts's driving force in the descriptive passages, "The Neutral Ground" is a fairer and more balanced book. A sound historical novel, it should rank with the best of the season.

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

ISLANDS IN LITERATURE

"There is no frigate like a book to take us lands away," and only books will give you stop-over privileges at the islands briefly described below. Have you visited them lately? Allowing 5 points for each island correctly named and another 5 for the author who created it, a score of 60 is par, 70 is good, 80 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 14.

1. All manner of wild life, from penguins and monkeys to kangaroos and buffaloes, inhabited this island, on which Mr. and Mrs. Robinson and their four sons were shipwrecked.

2. To this island, "where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow, nor ever wind blows loudly, but it lies deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard lawns and bowery hollows crowned with summer sea," a famous English king retired to recover from his battle wounds.

3. The citizens of this island, all of them birds, were happy until a half-blind monk baptized them, and, as a consequence of having acquired souls, they acquired the evils of civilization too.

4. On this island, which floated in air and was inhabited by mathematicians and musicians, the food was served in geometrical shapes.

5. Escaping in a balloon from the besieged city of Richmond, five Union sympathizers were carried thousands of miles to an uncharted volcanic island in the South Pacific.

6. Quarantine marooned, among other travelers, a missionary and a prostitute on this island where the rainfall was 300 inches a year.

7. A vivisectionist used this island as a laboratory for the creation of quasi-humans from various forms of lower animals.

8. By means of fake channel lights, a retired Russian officer succeeded in wrecking ships that approached his island and thus kept himself supplied with the biggest of big game, man.

9. When two Republican gondoliers became king of this island, they proclaimed every department of government equal in rank and everybody the head of his department, with the result that they had to do all the menial chores around the palace.

10. When, in 1855, a shipload of orphans, their governess, and the ship's doctor were cast away on this tropical island, the Victorian style of living was established and remained unchanged for 67 years.

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Steel in the Melting Pot

OUT OF THIS FURNACE. By Thomas Bell. New York: Little, Brown & Co. 1941. 413 *pp.* $2.50.

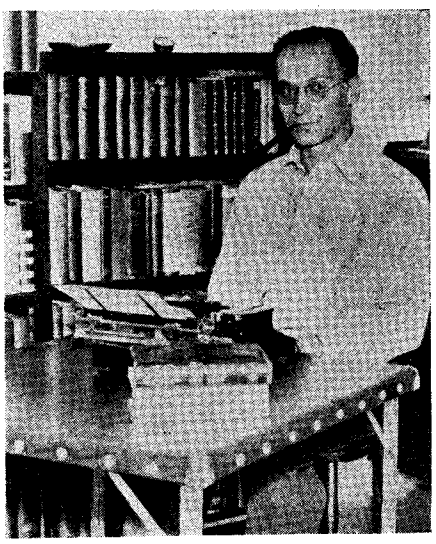
Reviewed by MAURICE HINDUS

OF all the writers who have come out of our so-called "new immigration," that from Southern and Southeastern Europe, none deserves more hearty acclamation than Thomas Bell, author of the novel "Out of the Furnace." Of Slovak ancestry, he is as important in fiction as is his brother Slav, Louis Adamic, in nonfiction, and for the same reason: both portray the America of the newcomer for those who sometimes forget that at one time they too were newcomers.

The son of a steel worker, himself once a worker in a mill, Thomas Bell chooses for his subject the "Hunkies," —chiefly Slovaks in a steel community. In terms not of years but of history it is a long way from the America of Carnegie, Frick, Gary, and other steel magnates who had spared neither money nor power to smash unions, to the triumphant CIO contracts with Big Steel. Yet it is this period that Bell covers in his highly readable and impressive novel, and Americans who have been led to believe that alien-born workers bring with them a spirit of rebelliousness to the American factory would do well to read it. They would discover just the opposite, that the peasant immigrant brings with him a medieval meekness and a pathetic readiness to subjugate himself to whatever conditions industry seeks to impose on him including the cruel twelve-hour day and the seven-day week. His rebelliousness rises only during his process of Americanization, out of the vast array of American experiences that keep transforming his personality.

Though it tells more about labor in the steel industry than any other work I have read, "Out of the Furnace" is only incidentally a labor novel. Primarily it is a story of common folk, the most common that the Lord has created, men and women who are motivated by no extraordinary ambitions and to whom nothing extraordinary ever happens. They eat, sleep, work, make love, marry, rear families, drink hard liquor, swear fiendishly, fight now and then, get blown up in factories, die from paralytic strokes or other diseases, gossip about each other's sins, get fleeced by cheap politicians of their nationality. At first one marvels at the courage of the author in choosing characters that seem nonentities. The wonder is all the more keen because though a Slav, Bell writes with the restraint of a frigid Anglo-Saxon. No abandon here, either in mood, situation, or style. Yet like the waters in a deep and quiet stream the story flows on and on, and the people and their seemingly tawdry experiences become increasingly important and entrancing. Of course only an author with power to create character earnestly and vividly can achieve so extraordinary a result with so unextraordinary a collection of human beings.

Reading this book enriches one's understanding of the America of Braddock, Homestead, Gary, and other steel towns and heightens one's appreciation of the "little fellows," without whom in peace as well as in war nothing big ever happens.



Thomas Bell

No Longer the Forgotten Men

THE DAM. By Jerome Ellison. New York: Random House. 1941. 176 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by DORSHA HAYES

JOHN STORM is the American who does not think of himself as big or little; he just thinks of himself as a man with work to do. But a day comes when he is in the fullness of his strength and there is no work. What happens then to the Storm family, to Emily, his wife, to Ted, his young son, what WPA means to John, all this and more, form the basis of this moving and exciting story. And if you do not care what happens to John Storm, then there is little in life of any importance that you will ever care about.

This is a novel that anyone with the wish to have a full understanding of this country should read. Mr. Ellison's sympathetic approach tends to break down those dangerous barriers that rise up separating one group of citizens from another, creating disunity. A book on a serious theme, it reads with the ease of a light novel, a novel that can be read at one sitting without lapse of interest. The competent technique, neither intrusive nor inadequate, serves its purpose in giving free release to the book's spirit. And that spirit has the sturdy courage, the simple nobility that redeems mankind. The brief prefaces to chapters scattered throughout the book widen the range of expression and contribute to the force of the story.

It might have been a more triumphant story if John Storm had experienced Relief fully and had come out of that experience strong and unafraid. The WPA worker drawn from Home Relief looks upon the uncertified man in a supervisory position as a creature still living in that other world where personal dignity is easily maintained and is not a matter of fierce and personal struggle. John stands watching the men under him pass by. "He thought of them going before Relief and swearing to their poverty and need. That must have been hard for some of those men to do; they were proud men, some of them. Thank God they hadn't made *him* do that!" I am sorry John Storm was not put to that test. I should have thought more of him if he had managed to survive it. I hope the author did not doubt his readers on that point.

Remindful of "Little Man What Now" in its compassionate pathos, and in its subject, "The Dam" is a different book. The first came out of the dark early days of Hitler's Germany, this comes out of present-day America. It is good that the two books are so dissimiliar. In this American story, there is no darkness of spirit; there is no defeat.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 370)

BLISS CARMAN:
SPRING'S SARABAND

Oh heart, hear thou the summons,
Put every grief away,
When all the motley masques of earth
Are glad upon a day.
Alack, that any mortal
Should less than gladness bring
Into the choral joy that sounds
The saraband of spring!

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Farjeon . . .

MISS GRANBY'S SECRET OR THE BASTARD OF PINSK. By Eleanor Farjeon. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1941. 360 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

IN a clever little book called "Victorian Panorama" by Peter Quennell there are some snapshots of English country-house life in (I think) 1848. The photographer did his best; but all that is left is some faceless and transitory ghosts in preposterous bonnets and dim tall hats. The immediacy of the snapshot suggests, as a more formal study could not do, at once the remoteness and the mystery of those obscure gentlefolk. What did they think and what did they feel?

Miss Farjeon's novel is an elaborate jest, but it is also an attempt to provide an answer. It deals with the emotions of a young lady of sixteen who lived in the year 1849. Adelaide Granby was of a literary turn of mind: in after years she became a popular novelist, the indefatigable author of some fifty romances. In her old age she used to dispute with her favorite niece (an advanced young woman for 1912) the necessity of putting into fiction the Facts of Life. Miss Adelaide herself had always got along very well without them: though she dropped a hint (and rather more than a hint) that she knew more than she pretended to know; that in her youth she had had her experiences. . . .

After her death the niece discovered among her effects a novel and a diary. The novel—written at the age of sixteen—is called "The Bastard of Pinsk." In it a Bastard is "a very noble Hero of Royal Blood," a lecher la "a Man of the World," a pimp is "an exquisite young Gentleman of Fashion," and a brothel is "a Place where Love boils over." It is a romance full of seething innocence, all fancy and no fact, and it occupies pp. 87-274 in this book. The diary suggests that the young Adelaide had "given herself" to a drawing-master. The gift may have been just a kiss or it may have been more. That is Miss Granby's secret.

The novel—though the niece occupies some of it—really centres around "The Bastard of Pinsk." Would a young lady in 1849 really have composed such an effusion? Probably not: there are some unexpectedly modern passages. But it is not what she would have written, or might have written, but what she *ought* to have written that matters. Clearly this is such a romance as a very young lady, in the dawn of the nineteenth century, ought to have written. Herein lie the charm and the success of "Miss Granby's Secret."

Train . . .

MR. TUTT COMES HOME. By Arthur Train. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1941. 341 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by PHIL STONG

THIS makes an even dozen volumes about Mr. Tutt so that he is a fairly standard article and there is not much to be said about him that has not been said many times before. The benevolent, slightly crotchety, sentimental, old lawyer who always finds a law to fit the necessities of the oppressed innocent has launched a hundred *Saturday Evening Posts*. The trick is no better and no worse than it has always been; the stories do not lay claim

Arthur Train

to any serious substance but they make very easy, pleasant reading.

The title is distinctly puzzling because home is just what Mr. Tutt seems painstakingly to avoid. The story locales are such places as Montana gold mines, New Mexico Indian country, the Northwest, Maine fishing streams, and so on. The Syrian story, incidentally, is much the most amusing of the collection—a tangle of western law and the commercial-matrimonial arrangements of the Near East down in Washington Street.

Someone might write at length some time on the old family retainers of the *Saturday Evening Post* editors and readers, as a kind of American index since the characters have great popularity and remarkable longevity. All of them, Tish, Scattergood Baines, Cappy Ricks, Florian Slappey, etc., have very similar traits: special ingenuity in some highly materialistic field, sentimentality rather than sensitivity, a modicum of simple humor, at least, and a paradoxical flair for direct action in the conduct of complicated maneuvers. Mr. Tutt belongs in this gallery, of course; he is almost its apotheosis.

Wood . . .

FIRST, THE FIELDS. By Charles Wood. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1941. 308 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM JAY GOLD

HERE is a kind of "Growth of of the Soil" in reverse. "First, the Fields" is the story of a man broken by the combined forces of land economics and big business operating together.

Hugh Winton was warned by his father not to try to make his living by growing tobacco. But Hugh was born a farmer, he loved the land that was his family's in the Old Belt of North Carolina, and he knew how to grow tobacco. What his father understood—and Hugh learned—was that knowledge and love and even luck weren't enough; through the system of the open market auction the big tobacco companies were able to pay just what they pleased, and farmers who had successfully fought drought and hail, carefully cut and cured their crop and proudly hauled it to market might, and often did, go home with not enough money to start another crop.

That resulted in borrowing and mortgaging, and heartbreaking calculations in the ledgers, and for all but the hardiest and the luckiest, ultimate ruin. Hugh Winton worked hard and long, but without success. He joined the farmers' coöperative association, which tried to buck the big companies and market the tobacco fairly, but it was impossible to unite the farmers completely, and the venture simply hastened the bankruptcy of those who had participated in it. In Hugh's case it meant that he lived to work his inherited land as a tenant.

It meant also that he lost his wife, who had tried in vain to keep him from staking everything on the fields; as his father had done, she even urged him to give up the unequal struggle.

"First, the Fields" is Charles Wood's first book. Written with an objectivity not often found in first novels, it is nevertheless full of understanding that comes from intimate personal knowledge. The story is unevenly told, and suffers a good deal from the Southern novelist's apparently ever-present problem of rendering dialect convincingly and easily. It is perhaps weakest in characterization. But Mr. Wood does succeed in telling plainly and simply the story of a divided people whose skill and love of their land could not make it possible for them to hold that land or even to enjoy the hard-won fruits of it.

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It Seemed to Him

COLLECTED EDITION OF HEYWOOD BROUN. Compiled by Heywood Hale Broun. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1941. 561 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE BRITT

UNLESS some cult of disciples should arise to spread the word or some unpredictable backsurge of popularity should sweep in to demand a five-foot shelf of the complete writings, here in this handy volume we have the main bid of Heywood Broun for the attention of posterity.

Broun's published volumes can be found in the libraries, to be sure. And old Broun readers digging into forgotten table drawers will run across columns of his, or play reviews or sports stories, which they once considered worth tearing out. Read again, those crumbling scraps probably will seem about as good as much that is in this book, because felicity seldom forsook him. For the *New York Telegram* and *World-Telegram* alone Broun wrote something like 3,000 columns, whereas this whole collection numbers only 189 items—from all sources. It is only a sampling.

But it is a broad, sensitive, and honest sample which avoids no inconsistencies, which touches Broun discriminatingly at his chief milestones, and recognizes dozens of the familiar old favorites that every reader would want. Broun's son, Heywood Hale Broun, has been a fine administrator of this literary heritage. And here it stands within the stiff limitations of two covers—the most of Broun that anybody is going to read for a long time and the part by which many judgments hereafter will be formed.

What will those judgments be? Is Broun going to make the team as a creator of literature or be dismissed with the tag of journalist? He had hopes himself, insisting that "It is not inevitable that today's strip of newsprint should be no more than tattered scrap in tomorrow's dustbin."

In Broun's case the dogmatic approach would be wronger than for almost any writer of our day, for he was not writing essays and stories and polemics and poetic fables. He was writing himself. This book, meeting an essential requirement for any Broun collection worth reading, is selected to present the man. The editor has recognized the necessity and offers his readers optimistic assurance about Broun that they may "feel that they know him as well as his oldest acquaintances when they have finished this book." Probably they will not, even though few of the oldest acquaintances had any confidence that they deeply knew the complicated person who was Broun. At any rate, in these pages lives a man, a character of infinite jest and boundless compassion, whose self-portrait is composed of truth, whim, indignation, and faith.

Broun comes through very strongly. It was no dim theory with him that, "When a man has a conviction, great or small, about eggs or eternity, he must wear it always in plain sight, pulled down tight upon his forehead." "I see no wisdom," he said again, "in saving up punches for a rainy day."

His indignation burns and flashes today as alive as ever in his pieces on Sacco and Vanzetti, and only slightly less hot against the New York Legislature which defeated the Child Labor Amendment.

His farewell shot at the New York World, "The Piece That Got Me Fired," is a bugle call to conscience and alertness which should find a bullseye in editorial minds so long as men in any manner tell what is the news. Many many others shine with the fire still blazing in them.

It is noteworthy, perhaps it is surprising, to find here the proof that up to the very last Broun was charging along with no sign of declining power. The earliest selections have the characteristic touch. After Sacco and Vanzetti the writing is laden with convictions. And some of the best pieces are within six months of his death. A match for any in the book is "There Is a Ship," June 9, 1939, and no light interlude could be more delicious than "Saratoga Fades," August 19.

As a writer Broun was as natural as a flowing stream. He never bothered about the writing. "When a commentator's chief concern," he said, "is finding the right word rather than the just cause, he isn't a reporter any more. He has gone around the corner and become one of posterity's children." Broun defied posterity on those terms. His causes were immediate, and if they were to fade from memory he accepted the risk.

On the showing of this rich and varied book, his chances with posterity should be good. It is not so much a chance I think, for Broun as the author of this and that. I am talking about Broun, a living character in our literature, a man who prevailed over a great talent in order to make himself an enduring and memorable person.

Heywood Broun

The Strachey Faith

A FAITH TO FIGHT FOR. By John Strachey. New York: Random House. 1941. 146 *pp.* $1.75.

Reviewed by PAUL BIRDSALL

THIS brief and simple message by the former Communist spokesman in England repudiates explicitly the present—or should one say recent—Communist Party line concerning the war, while abandoning none of the socialist faith John Strachey has steadily professed. His change of mind about the character of the war dates only from the Nazi invasion of Norway in April, 1940, and is admittedly not complete. Prior to April, 1940, he felt that the "decisive aspect" of the war was its Imperialist character, "in which we are fighting to hold colonies for our exploitation, while the Nazis are trying to grab them for their exploitation." He still feels that "this is *one* of the aspects of the war," even though clearly secondary to the essential task of preventing a Nazi world conquest.

The present preoccupation with self-defense against subjugation is a simple matter of self-preservation, and Strachey is entirely clear about it. He challenges the criminal irresponsibility of those who preach to Britain's depressed classes that Hitler's conquest would be for them merely "a change of masters." For all Englishmen it would mean permanent subjection to a status of slavery, in economic terms a bare and hopeless subsistence. For those already at the subsistence level of existence it would mean the permanent extinction of hope for betterment. "We sense that we are fighting to keep open the possibility to work and live for ourselves; to change and, if we so wish, overthrow our governments; to preserve, or to transform, our economic system for ourselves as we like; to dispute, to quarrel, to fight, if we must, amongst ourselves; instead of to serve,

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hopelessly and for ever, the Nazi will."

These things are enough to make men fight; they are not enough to insure victory. The substance of the book is an appeal for a fighting faith to achieve victory and with it a better world. The creed of Nazi world domination and the ideals which the Nazis have forged to achieve it—"lying, force, hatred and terror"—must be opposed by the most positive ideals which are worth fighting for, dying for, living for. The black Nazi creed of fear and force and hate and lies will create a "hell-world," and it can be overcome only by the moral principles of truth and love.

Strachey's principles of truth and love are not abstractions, since he discusses them specifically within the context of human society. Truth is the application of the scientific method to the analysis of society and its pursuit shows us the inequalities of power and opportunity in the capitalist democracies which are aligned against Hitler. To the extent that the beneficiaries of these disproportions maintain their political and economic power by the techniques of the fear they inspire and the falsehoods they tell, they are the enemy within the gate, the home-bred Nazis. The scientific technique supplies not merely the diagnosis, but the remedy. Marx took the first and most difficult "steps in laying down a genuine social science." "Socialism is the child of the attempt to apply the scientific, truth-seeking attitude of mind to human society."

But the truth is cold and intellectual. It is a star to steer by; it had no warmth for motive power. Science supplies the blue-print for the reconstruction of society, but there must be the will and the good-will to apply it. "The ideal of a society based upon the voluntary coöperation of free men, based upon their mutual love, persuasion and comprehension, instead of an empire of fear and force, has slowly emerged from the centuries of human evolution." "For if truth is the father of Socialism, then love, the love of our fellow-men, is its mother."

Socialism is the only aim that ultimately justifies the war and the only aim that can achieve victory. "Our war is only partly a war against the Nazis: it is equally a war against those amongst us who, whether they know it or not, at heart share the black Nazi faith." Strachey does not tell us much about the progress of the war on the home front, but it is clear that he is not satisfied that even a beginning has been made.

Paul Birdsall is the author of "Versailles: Twenty Years After."

French Diary

FRANCE SPEAKING. By Robert de Saint-Jean. Translated by Anne Green. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. 1941. 335 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

Reviewed by ANDRÉ MAUROIS

I REMEMBER that, at the beginning of the war, as I was spending a few days at the Ministry of Information, a young French journalist arrived from New York and created a great stir in that little world of professors and diplomats. At a time when nobody seemed to know what sort of information was wanted from us by the outside world, this young man, who was Robert de Saint-Jean, produced a complete and concrete report about news for America. It was a brilliant piece of work, concise, intelligent, exhaustive; it won its author the vice-chairmanship of the North American section, where unfortunately he was never given the means to act up to his ideas. However, in spite of all obstacles, he did more than anyone in that section to help American newspaper correspondents whose needs he understood and whose friendship he soon gained.

He publishes today the diary he kept during the terrible ten months which go from the declaration of war to the Armistice. It is, to me at least, an absorbingly interesting document. Not so much because Robert de Saint-Jean knew intimately many of the protagonists in the drama, but because he is an acute and fair observer who was then much more interested in the reactions of the average man than in the boasts of garrulous politicians. Saint-Jean never allowed his personal political passions to interfere with his judgment. In fact I believe his only strong passion was the desire to serve France. He had been, a few years before, secretary to Jacques Bainville, and he shows great respect for this disillusioned and profound historian. A friend of Reynaud, Saint-Jean was, like many others, desperate when he discovered that this brilliant and pathetic statesman, who spoke so well of action, was himself unable to act.

Of the French man in the street, whom he calls Arthur, he analyzes the reactions with deep insight. Arthur believed in France, in victory, in the Army, but respected no leader. The President of the Republic, if he appeared on the screen, unleashed Arthur's laughter. Robert de Saint-Jean quotes the very remarkable answers of a French schoolboy, a child who was, during the war, questioned by a journalist:

> "Who is the head of the Germans?"
> "Adolf. . . ."
> "Who is the head of the British?"
> "The Queen, whose name is Elizabeth."
> "Who is the head of the French?"
> "We...ell, there are several; some are in plain clothes, and others are in uniform."

An anecdote which shows very clearly how abstract the Republic had become. Contrary to Louis XIV, Saint-Jean remarks, all our Prime Ministers ought to have said: "I am *not* the State."

On the causes of the disaster, Robert de Saint-Jean agrees with André Morize and with all Frenchmen who do not make the defeat of their country an occasion for attacking their political opponents. Treason? No. Essentially lack of industrial preparation, lack of unity, lack of faith. All this was said before, but Robert de Saint-Jean says it with dispassionate wisdom and with a wealth of personal observations which help the reader to live again those dreadful days. If we find, in the younger generation, many minds of such honesty and intelligence, we shall not have to wait too long for the rebirth of France.

ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. New Switzerland, in "The Swiss Family Robinson," by Johann David Wyss.
2. Avilion, in "Morte d'Arthur," by Alfred Tennyson.
3. "Penguin Island," by Anatole France.
4. Laputa, in "Gulliver's Travels," by Jonathan Swift.
5. Lincoln Island, in "The Mysterious Island," by Jules Verne.
6. Pago-Pago, in "Rain," by Somerset Maugham.
7. "The Island of Doctor Moreau," by H. G. Wells.
8. Ship Trap Island, in "The Most Dangerous Game," by Richard Connell.
9. Barataria, in "The Gondoliers," by W. S. Gilbert.
10. "Orphan Island," by Rose Macaulay.

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Nazi Blueprint

GERMANY PREPARES FOR WAR. As outlined in 1932 by Ewald Banse. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1941. 357 *pp.* $3.

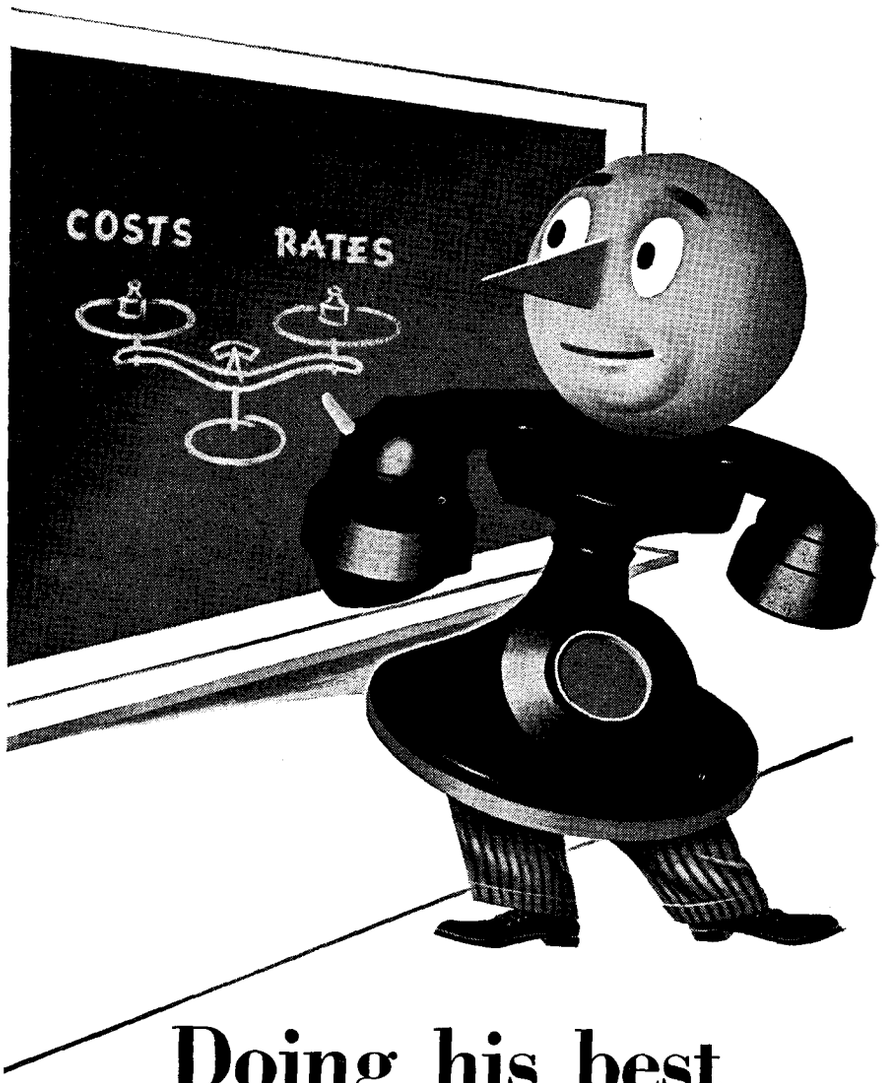
Reviewed by HENRY C. WOLFE

BACK in 1932, the year before the Nazis came to power, Ewald Branse, a German geographer and military scientist, wrote a book that was to exert a profound influence upon the Reich's future policies. In many respects, it is a companion piece to "Mein Kampf." It is an indispensable volume for the student of the Third Reich, and in fact for the layman. For it is impossible to understand what the Fuehrer and his followers are doing today unless one has some grasp of the philosophy and direction which guide the Brown dictatorship. And it is startling to see how much of the program outlined in "Germany Prepares for War" has already been accomplished by Hitler.

If the reader buys this book expecting to find a detailed plan of Germany's future attacks on England, her coming campaigns in the Balkans, in Spain, and perhaps in South America, he will be disappointed. Dr. Banse did not set out to do that. For this is a treatise written for the guidance of a nation still unsure of its course, still lacking armaments, still without a definite foreign or military policy. It is a tract prepared for ruthless, ambitious German militarists bidding for world power. It ought to be read by every American interested in our national defense.

Geographer Banse places primary stress on such war factors as terrain, weather, rivers, seas, lakes, raw materials, transportation systems, forests, food supplies, and populations. But he gives almost equal weight to national psychology and the human element. He recognizes the vital importance of morale. While denouncing Britain's "campaign of lies" in the World War, he has admiration for British ingenuity and determination. And he goes on to deplore the fact that the British beat the Germans in this warfare of propaganda, because, he believes, the British put it in the hands of civilian experts while the Germans left it to rather bungling army men.

One may wonder, as he reads Herr Banse's pages, whether the Germans have profitted from them enough to assure victory to the Reich. Speaking of the First World War the author says "the Germans had no notion of the tenacity and the organizing power of the Anglo-Saxons on both sides of the Atlantic." Has Hitler any better conception of them today?



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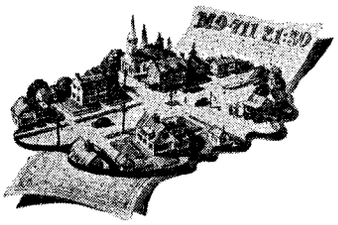

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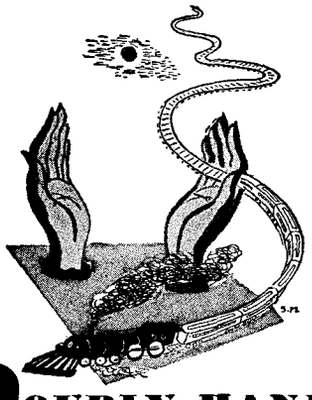

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THE AWAKENING OF EUROPEAN POETRY

(*Continued from page* 5)

and ornament. His characters of noble rank, Greek, Roman, Oriental, could with propriety speak the language of high civilization the court required. His dialogue, the quintessence of salon conversation, was a fabric of delicate distinctions of emotion and thought, of hints and suggestions which the mature and the sophisticated could divine. His plots revolved about the chief interests of an aristocracy: love, affairs of state, intrigue for precedence and power.

But Racine had learned about discipline from the Jansenists, the discipline of felt passions. He portrayed in his own characters what he felt "in his own heart, hypersensitive, emulous, pitiless, yet noble." And in Racine the "standard Alexandrine becomes musical, flexible, responsive to every light and shade. Tremendous passions expressed in the limited vocabulary Racine permitted himself have an effect of deliberate understatement quite as powerful as Elizabethan hyperbole."

I CITE Professor Neff's chapter on French Classicism as an example, but any of the other chapters would do as well. Indeed, in one sense they would do rather better as instances of the masterful economy of his work. The lineaments of the classic French traditions are, after all, relatively simple. The origins of romanticism, of what Mr. Neff in his next chapter title calls "The Voice of the North," are more difficult to define and to assemble. Largely by apt instances, both in historical fact and in literary illustration, Mr. Neff analyzes and communicates the quality of the poetry of "northern inspiration" in both Germany and England. He shows the revolt of feeling, practice, and thought against "poetry produced as self-conscious, rational, aristocratic art." He indicates the reawakening of the lyric impulse, the drawing upon folklore, saga, and medieval chronicles. By assimilating nature to man, by disclosing the mystery of daily life and adumbrating the supernatural, poetry re-opened old domains and found new ones.

Not less admirable in its assemblage of complicated materials into a single telling focus and perspicuous story is that entitled "Joy in Commonalty Spread." It would be hard to find the temper and intention of the young Wordsworth better stated than in Professor Neff's few pages, nor quotations more decisively used:

> Europe . . . was thrilled with joy,
> France standing on the top of golden hours,
> And human nature seeming born again.

Equally well-studied are the humanitarian and democratic revolts of Byron and Shelley, the faith in the common man shared by writers of poetry, philosophy, and history in France, the disillusionment after 1848, the "sad lucidity of soul" of Arnold, the "wistful persistence" of Clough in "Say Not the Struggle Naught Availeth," and the outdated republicanism of Swinburne out of touch with a world in which Germany and the United States had begun to challenge British supremacy.

At the risk of repeating ad nauseam the central compliment to Professor Neff's artfully transmuted labors, I should like to mention his discussion of "The Glory That Was Greece." I cannot think of any single discussion that manages to do such diverse things with the influence of Greece on the literary imagination of the nineteenth century. Walter Pater might seem to have said the final sympathetic word about Winckelmann and the image he half found, half created, of the pure white "serenity and blitheness" of Greek art. But Mr. Neff seems Winckelmann in the perspective of later scholarship; he sees with more discriminating reserve the nuances of Greece-worship in Goethe, in Hölderlin, in Leopardi, and in Keats. He sees, finally, what archaeology, anthropology, and Nietzsche did to the almost bodiless quietude of the "Greek legend." He analyzes subtly why the legend did more than the facts to generate poetry. He finds the reason in Leopardi's observation: "Few can be great, and in the arts and in poetry perhaps none, if not dominated by illusions."

On the theme of "Nature" in English poetry there have been mountains of books. Mr. Neff has forty-four pages. In them he has to traverse the whole complex of ideas from Holbach's "Système de la Nature," in the eighteenth century, to the relativisms of Einstein. He has set himself the task of showing the way in which many poets in many different manners found inspiration in a Nature held to be friendly and sympathetic. He shows how mechanistic physics produced the "alien world" from which poets like Tennyson recoiled. He shows, finally, how a "poetry of nature" that had risen in revolt against physics found itself much more sympathetic to the methods of natural history. He indicates how poets have made man again "aware of an infinitude of beauty in her [Nature's] moods, even in her ferocity and ugliness. Through them 'the

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common face of Nature' still speaks to the senses and the spirit 'remember-able things.' "

The renascence of wonder is treated with comparable understanding and precision: Kubla Khan, the gift of an opium dream, French interest in the East as a land of magic and barbaric sumptuousness, the early nineteenth-century celebration of the sensuous and the sinister. Mr. Neff traces through the French, the Italians, the Germans, and the English the transcendent suggestion and eerie wonder, to the "luxe, calme et volupté" of Baudelaire.

And finally Mr. Neff brings us to "This Uneasy Heart of Ours," when, as Heine put it, "since the heart of the poet is the center of the world, it must at the present time be lamentably torn apart." Mr. Neff traces in society the forces that have made the poet increasingly uneasy and ambiguous in his feelings, the mechanization, vulgarization, and obfuscation of life until "from Mallarmé, the high priest of esoteric verse in the grand style, escaped a cry more despairing than any of Faust's: 'The flesh is dull, alas! and I have read all the books.' " The poets had turned from the world to themselves, to personal impressions almost privately and secretly spoken, to the subconscious, to the unconscious. They had retired to their own lost souls, which they found they had lost along with their audiences.

It is difficult to condense an already condensed account, or to indicate the precision, the happiness of the illustrations, the sensitiveness, and the sometimes noble simplicity of the prose of this book. But one can indicate the extraordinary contribution this volume makes to the art of criticism. Here is history used as an aid, not an evasion, of esthetic analysis, and philosophy used as it is by poets, as a part and a phase of their imagination. "Comparative literature" can be a mere catalogue of literary dates in various national domains. But Mr. Neff's book is something infinitely more. It is a study of the poetic impulse in Europe, a study of the soil in which it flowered, and a study, sensitive and expert, of the flowers themselves in their common garden. It is hard to know whether it will be more serviceable to scholars, reminding them of the context of their special labors, to poets showing them the ancestry of their spirits, or to critics, showing them how poetic styles, however original, are variations on widely current themes. It may be added that Mr. Neff does not make the mistake of thinking poems are "about" ideas. But he makes quite clear how ideas *color* the work of poets, and how social conditions color their ideas.

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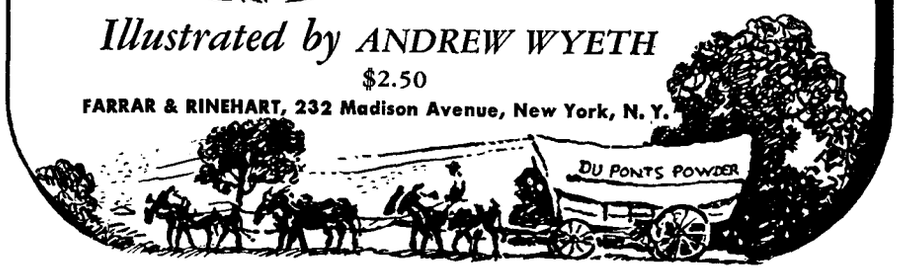

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WHAT POETS ARE SAYING

(*Continued from page 4*)

The Sense of the Incongruous.—But the doom that they foresee is to most of them unreasoning and, against the background of our present society, incongruous. From this basic idea springs a whole collection of poems about death intruding suddenly in the midst of petty affairs, about murder in the schoolroom or bombs dropping on a college football field where a team of criminals is playing against a team of maniacs. Or again, a poet like Weldon Kees, who ought to be published more widely, will write a sort of fugue in which visions of destruction, expressed in dignified blank verse, are interrupted by the deliberately trivial remarks of Bones and Sambo. A great deal of the perplexing and nightmarish poetry of these times becomes simple enough if we approach it as an effort to depict a world that is itself a nightmare.

Psycho-Social Parallelism.—The conflict between violence and reason does not exist merely in the world outside. The same conflict is repeated in each man's heart; and the inner and outer struggles mirror each other by a sort of psycho-social parallelism. Thus, Frederic Prokosch says in one of his recent poems, "The Reapers":

> The evil implicit in our age like dust falls everywhere.
> Even in these flowing, flickering sheaves of wheat I see it.
> I see it in the singing faces, I feel it in the August air.
>
> For that is all our fever. It is a fever of the spirit,
> And it lies deep. It will heal again, but certainly not soon.
> We cannot localize it, we cannot even see or hear it.
>
> The smart, efficient, petrifying flavors of our age
> Lie scattered all around us, not only in the lies and bullets,
> But here, in the hot touch of a hand, or the turning of a page.

The Sense of Personal Guilt.—If that is true—if the fever of the world is also a fever of the individual spirit—than it follows that each of us in his own heart is partly responsible for the world catastrophe. Here again is an idea now being expressed by many poets. "Whenever we kissed we cocked the future's rifles," says George Barker in a sonnet addressed "To any member of my generation." But it is W. H. Auden who has treated the theme of personal guilt most often and most effectively. When he came to write about the new war, he did not burst forth against Hitler for having invaded Poland, or against Chamberlain for having tried to make peace with Hitler; instead he emphasized the general blame that rests on all of us. His poem "September 1, 1939" contains a good deal of his recent philosophy. It is too long to summarize in full, but I might try to give the gist of it in prose:

> Accurate scholarship can reconstruct the whole offense, from Luther to the present day, that has driven our civilization mad. But that is unnecessary, since even schoolchildren know that those to whom evil is done do evil in return. In one sense, all of us are children, lost in a haunted wood and afraid of the night; children who have never been happy or good. Our error has been to crave what we cannot have: not universal love but to be loved each for himself alone; from this guilty pride come our present misfortunes. Meanwhile the Just exchange their messages like points of fire in a night of terror; and like them I wish to show an affirming flame.

Comradeship.—And what is the affirmation that Auden and poets like him wish to make? Auden himself has called it Love, but the word has so many meanings, sexual, sentimental, and religious, that I should prefer to use a less multicolored expression like comradeship or communion. He has kept insisting that no one can exist alone, that all of us must learn to break through the walls of our separate egoisms, that "we must love one another or die." It is this need for comradeship that led several of the younger English poets toward communism—as note Stephen Spender's address to the "young men oh young comrades"—and it is now leading some of them by devious paths toward Christianity. This at least would seem to be the lesson of Auden's latest and longest poem, "The Double Man."

To this list of basic ideas that I have given, a few others might be added. There is, for example, the wish to honor greatness that was first expressed by Spender ("I think continually of those who were truly great") and later carried out by Auden in his poems to Yeats and Melville and Freud. There is the idea that the first need of this world is a restoration to psychological health. There is the interest in ritual and ceremonial that is best exemplified in the work of Paul Goodman. Taken together, these ideas furnish the logical framework of the new poetry. They can be criticized for intellectual vagueness, for sentimentality and even defeatism, but not for being beyond the comprehension of the average intelligent reader. In the future, they will doubtless be carried too far. In the present, they seem to be providing a basis for writing good poems.

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Young . . .

BEHIND THE RISING SUN. By James R. Young. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1941. 334 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by LINTON WELLS

JAMES R. YOUNG lived for 13 years in Japan, where he was the able correspondent of Hearst's International News Service and the enterprising business manager of the one-time influential American-owned *Japan Advertiser*. Esteemed by responsible and high-principled Japanese, he was also—and still is—a sympathetic friend of the Japanese people, but not of the imperialistic military clique, hoodlums, and fanatics who jailed and convicted him last year for exposing their efforts to destroy Japan.

"Behind the Rising Sun" is a serio-ludicrous collection of reminiscences, anecdotes, and revelations covering Jimmy's long residence in Japan. Young says, "Officials will condemn my statements and deny my facts (but) real Japanese at heart will be silent, for they know it is the truth that I write, even though it hurts." I know it is the truth that he writes, because I, too, have lived and worked in Japan.

In ripping off the Japanese mask, Young reveals the illogic, the inconsistency, the stupidity, the injustice, the absurdity, the depravity, the tragedy, the menace, the unsavory mess that, collectively, is Japan.

He shows you a land suffering from spyphobia in its most virulent form—the Japan where nitwitted police regard Rotary International as a branch of the Communist Third Internationale; where the author was accused of membership in a Greek spy ring because he wore a Phi Gamma Delta fraternity pin.

Young's anecdotes about stupid police persecution of suspected foreign spies, particularly himself, are classics. The detailed account of his 61 days in jail is devastating. The Japanese New Order in Asia, says Young, is really a New Odor, which "smells of narcotics, greenback currency, trade monopoly, bombings, assassinations, crop failures and famine, floods, abandoned mines and factories, terrorism, general corruption, and insecurity."

Jimmy spent 1464 hours in solitary confinement and was questioned seven hours a day for forty days (even about his *thoughts*) in vain attempts to force an admission that his newspaper articles were contrary to fact and that he was an enemy of Japan.

Then he was brought to trial and after one week the judge handed down

James Young

a verdict that, "irrespective of the truth contained in your articles, I must find you guilty." Young's sentence was six months in prison, suspended for three years.

But the real significance of "Behind the Rising Sun" lies in its expose of how unstable aggression has made Japan, and in its advice to the United States regarding our future course of action: Young believes that our policy should be one of tit-for-tat, not appeasement and continued aid for Japanese aggression. He says that "peace with such leaders as Japan now has is impossible," but emphasizes that "we need not go to war (because) we can break up the Japanese military machine" by a manifestation of strength in support of economic pressure. He reminds us that the Dragon Kingdom always absorbs its conquerors.

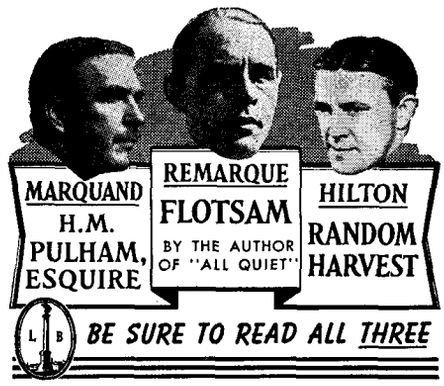
Abend . . .

JAPAN UNMASKED. By Hallett Abend. New York: Ives Washburn, Inc. 1941. 322 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by T. A. BISSON

RECENT casualties in the list of our accustomed newspaper correspondents in the Far East indicate that there, too, the war has begun to take its toll. A few weeks ago the familiar name of Hugh Byas made a final appearance under its customary Tokyo dateline. And now Hallett Abend pens his valedictory as a Far Eastern correspondent, at least for the duration, after being forced to pull up stakes from Shanghai.

His last book, "Chaos in Asia," even more than his dispatches, had placed him in the unwanted category by the Japanese military. The latter had known how to make their displeasure felt. Abend's rooms had been searched, his servants had been beaten, there were repeated threats and one case of physical assault. He had accepted



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by Cecil Roberts

(Foreword by Wendell Willkie)

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the necessity of an armed bodyguard, but had not been willing to wear a bullet-proof vest. In October, 1940, he became one of the American evacuees.

His most effective chapters relate to southeast Asia, where he made the "grand tour" after his enforced retirement from China. The closing months of 1940, according to his report, witnessed intensified war preparations throughout the vast south Pacific area over which Japan's shadow falls. Hongkong had become an armed fortress, determined to resist assault no matter what the odds. Singapore was adding more men and machines to its already formidable defenses, although it still lacked the naval vessels for which it had been created. The Dutch East Indies were a hive of activity. Defense preparations were making steady progress, and a resolve not to yield without a severe struggle was much in evidence. In Manila alone, where he calls attention to a complete lack of air raid precautions, did he note any signs of apathy.

He devotes special consideration to the Singapore censorship—and notes that improvements have already been effected as the result of his promised revelations in this book. He accuses the British authorities not merely of the usual annoyances and futilities which mark any censorship system, but even of failure to return some of the documentary material submitted for inspection before his departure from Singapore. The material as returned was placed under seal, and he was advised not to break the seal until after he had left the port. He discovered his losses on the high seas. This chapter and the one which covers his leave-taking of Shanghai are among the liveliest in the book, largely because they consist almost wholly of personal experiences. Among the most rewarding sections, which also include illuminating discussions of the strategy and economics of tin, rubber and oil, are those dealing with southwest Asia.

TRADE WINDS

IN the past few years, the sale of art books in the United States has increased to an amazing extent. We hazard the guess that the WPA art projects are to a large extent responsible for the great interest shown in all forms of art. The latest literary reflection of this interest is the announcement by Harpers that, in conjunction with the Hyperion Press of New York, they are to publish a new series of art books on May 6. The series will be opened with a monograph on Henry Varnum Poor, one of the most talented American painters, skillful colorist, and draftsman whose canvases have been acquired by important museums and collectors. The color reproductions compare favorably with anything done in France and Germany. The happy part about the Harper announcement is the reasonable price: $2.75 per volume.

★ ★

☞Fifty thousand copies of a book are a lot of books, especially when this figure represents a first printing. The Dial Press will soon publish Pierre van Paassen's new book, "The Time is Now." This new work, they claim, points out how Hitler can be stopped and the steps the United States must take now to do it. The publishers state that no part of this book has ever appeared previously in a magazine or newspaper, nor has it been delivered from a lecture platform.

★ ★

☞In a series of three books, Messrs. Duell, Sloan, and Pearce are publishing the works of Frank Lloyd Wright in complete form. The first book, just published, is "Frank Lloyd Wright on Architecture, 1894-1940"—edited with an introduction by Frederick Gutheim; the second book, "An Autobiography"—four volumes in one—will appear in the Fall; the third, "In The Nature of Materials,"—the buildings of Frank Lloyd Wright, 1887-1941—by Henry Russell Hitchcock, will also be published some time this year. Few men have contributed as much to civilized living as Mr. Wright. We concur with Messrs. Duell, Sloan, and Pearce—Frank Lloyd Wright is the Whitman of architecture.

★ ★

☞May 22nd is the publication date set by Oxford University Press on "American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman," by F. O. Matthiessen. The main subject of the book deals with the views held by five of our major writers—Emerson, Whitman, Hawthorne, Thoreau, and Melville—concerning the function and nature of literature, and the degree to which their practice bore out their theories. Mr. Matthiessen points out that the half-decade of 1850-55 saw the appearance of "Representative Men," "The Scarlet Letter," "The House of the Seven Gables," "Moby Dick," "Pierre," "Walden," and "Leaves of Grass." This probably constitutes an unbroken record in American literature.

★ ★

☞Sylvia Townsend Warner, the English novelist, upon learning of the recent death of Elizabeth Madox Roberts, wrote the following touching tribute in a letter to an American friend:

> I am very sorry indeed that Elizabeth Madox Roberts is dead. Ever since you sent me "The Time of Man" I have been one of her admirers, and two summers ago when we were in Carolina I was often finding that her writing had made

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE OWL SANG THREE TIMES *Vera Kelsey* (Crime Club: $2.)	Poisoning of American engaged in Rio coffee trade cleared up by observant young girl.	South American scene lends special color to yarn with more body (not bodies) than most.	Commendable
SING A SONG OF MURDER *Robert P. Koehler* (Phoenix: $2.)	Archaeologist and mystery-girl die violently in Southwestern Indian country. New Mexico policeman cracks case.	Murder plot involving missing will and rich inheritance pleasantly dolled up with Navajo folk-lore and quizzical sleuthing.	Readable
THE PERENNIAL BOARDER *Phoebe Atwood Taylor* (Norton: $2.)	Cape Cod inn with vanishing corpse and trickey occupants gives Asey Mayo's deductive powers good workout.	Mystery holds up well and story exhibits all Mayo virtues—although all concerned take tragedy rather lightly.	Good fun
HERE COMES THE CORPSE *George Bagby* (Crime Club: $2.)	Muddled affairs of Manhattan society family culminate in murder and goad Insp. Schmidt to sartorial elegance.	Breezy bunch of life-like characters—with sleuth well in lead—carry story along to highly unusual ending.	High grade

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many of the things I saw already familiar and known by heart: the way a girl got off the main-road school bus and began to walk up a stony track to a wooden house halfway up a mountain, the demeanor of audience and witnesses in a courthouse in Marion, the red dust rising off the stony pasture through the cool clouds of asters, the groups of children and poultry sitting together on a back porch, the echo of a gunshot ricochetting through the woods, the dirt-track roads winding between the stands of a bleached spectral Indian corn.

★ ★

☞Within the past few months the loss to American letters through untimely death has been considerable. The early deaths of F. Scott Fitzgerald, Sherwood Anderson, and Elizabeth Madox Roberts have taken away writers whose literature was as genuinely American as pumpkin pie. We are reminded by all this of the conversation between Prince Henry and Sir John Falstaff in Henry IV, we believe, in which Prince Henry says:

Why, thou owest God a death.

And Sir John Falstaff answers:

'Tis not due yet; I would be loth to pay him before his day.

★ ★

☞"Men of Europe," latest work of André Simone, which will be published by Modern Age Books on May 12, will be not only a behind-the-scenes account of the men guiding the fate of Europe, but also the story of Simone's own dangerous career, lived in the center of world events. Simone is a newspaperman who speaks five languages and has covered every important European capital from Madrid to Moscow. His career is studded with spectacular scoops, such as his uncovering of a cache of 40,000 Nazi documents in Barcelona at the outbreak of the Franco rebellion. He was an editor of "The Brown Book of the Hitler Terror," and author of last year's much-talked of "J'Accuse."

★ ★

☞A challenging, eye-opening, and authentic picture of underprivileged children in the United States is given in "Everyone's Children, Nobody's Child," by Justine Wise Polier, Children's Court Judge in the Domestic Relations Court of the City of New York. Judge Polier recounts actual stories of children who have appeared before her, analyzes the gaps in the complicated welfare structure of New York, and outlines a minimum program for meeting the national problem.

★ ★

☞Sir Basil Bartlett, who was wounded during the evacuation from Dunkirk, tells many humorous stories in his Journal for May 1940, entitled "My First War." This is an intimate picture of British forces in Belgium and France. As an English liaison officer in a small French city, Sir Basil found much that was amusing.

LOUIS GREENFIELD.

Records in Review

Edward Tatnall Canby

THE battle of the moment on records is still that between two recordings of the Beethoven *Eroica*, conducted by Bruno Walter (N. Y. Philharmonic; C M-449; $6.50) and Arturo Toscanini (N.B.C. Symph. V M-765; $7). Both recordings are markedly different; both have strong and weak points. Toscanini's version is about what those familiar with his technique will expect. There is that perfection of ensemble which no orchestra, unless the Boston, can match. There is the tautness which cannot relax. And this last, for me, robs the interpretation of greatness, for Beethoven, between stormings of heaven, dispenses much *Gemütlichkeit,* and nowhere more beautifully than in the *Eroica.* For all its intensity this performance seems to me cold and glittering. . . . In comparison with this streamlined beauty Walter's older model seems a bit heavy, almost turgid. Yet it is gratefully human, natural, unaffected. Energy—human, not superhuman—is there when needed, but so is lyricism, unhurried.

★ ★

The recent Mitropoulos version of the Franck Symphony (C M-436; $5.50) makes that comfortable war horse do an incredible and rather exciting dance. The characteristic Mitropoulos technique—sudden and nervous changes in dynamics and (in this case) tempo, an intensity that seems just short of hysterical at times—makes this an arresting interpretation, one that is perhaps justified in a work of this type. . . . Another orchestra is introduced by Columbia, the Pittsburg, with the well-known Fritz Reiner, who leads the Venusberg Music from *Tannhaüser* (C X-193; $2.50). This excellent album suggests that the Reiner-Pittsburg combination may be one of Columbia's best. Many will prefer this to the Stokowski version. . . . Stokowski, incidentally, has made a new *Afternoon of a Faun* (Debussy) which is satisfactory in spite of a few irritating touches and an unusually slow tempo. (V 17700; $1.). . . . But more interesting is the Debussy Rhapsody for clarinet and orchestra, played by Benny Goodman and the N. Y. Philharmonic. (C 11517-D; $1.). Fine Debussy, competently played by Benny, who unbends farther each time he appears on "classical" records. . . . To complete the singles, there is a fine recording by Gieseking of the Chopin Barcarolle in F sharp Minor, perhaps unexpectedly after the memorable Debussy recordings by this pianist. (C 71026-D; $1.).

★ ★

Perhaps the Missa Solemnis of Beethoven, recorded by the Boston Symphony Harvard Glee Club and Radcliffe Choral Society (V M-758,759; $13) should have been at the head of

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this column. Long awaited, this recording far surpasses expectations, which to be honest were not too high. Again we find Victor's marvelous aural perspective, and the difficulties of actual-performance recording seem to have been solved. The hitherto impossible job of recording such a vast assemblage of performers has been done, and one of the greatest works of Beethoven now takes its place within everyone's reach. Perhaps most interesting is the convincing demonstration of the dramatic power of an "amateur" chorus of college students singing under a great conductor. No professional chorus could show a greater penetration into the spirit of this music, perhaps the most difficult choral music by any great composer. Koussevitsky is in his element, and the performance is splendidly integrated. Soloists are mediocre, but their music is unimportant on the whole. . . . Victor's monthly Mozart is of unusual interest. The seldom heard (why?) Sinfonia Concertante for Wind and Orchestra is performed under, of all conductors, Stokowski. (V M-760; $4.50). Expecting the worst, I was gratified to find that to the best of my knowledge there is only one short passage where Stokowski betrays his presence; the rest is good, accurate, well-phrased Mozart, perhaps, if anything, a bit too classical.

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, traveling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature, expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). All advertisements must be consonant with the purpose and character of The Saturday Review. Ads of a strictly personal nature are limited to an exchange of correspondence, thus also enabling an exchange of references. Rates: 10 cents per word including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Payment in full must be received ten days in advance of publication. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

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■	72- U	73- N	■	74- Q	75- B	76- D	■	77- F	78- W	79- M	80- I	81- V	82- X	83- U	■	84- W
85- R	86- S	87- E	88- P	89- N	90- I	■	91- V	92- E	93- F	94- D	95- C	96- S	97- P	■	98- G	99- I
100- Q	■	101- Y	102- H	103- G	104- K	105- D	■	106- O	107- J	108- C	■	109- X	■	110- J	111- L	112- M
113- D	114- U	115- N	116- T	■	117- I	118- J	119- X	120- O	121- Q	122- B	■	123- B	124- C	■	125- G	126- C
127- V	128- S	129- B	130- L	■	131- I	132- N	■	133- J	134- A	135- B	■	136- O	137- S	138- K	139- R	140- A
■	141- J	142- B	143- H	■	144- A	145- J	146- D	■	147- P	148- O	149- T	150- H	151- D	152- N	■	153- O
154- I	155- K	156- L	157- S	158- E	159- D	160- U	161- V	■	162- X	163- F	164- C	■	165- P	166- K	167- M	168- T
169- Y	■	170- C	171- L	■	172- B	173- X	174- G	■	175- V	176- M	177- Y	178- T	179- L	180- W	181- E	182- A

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1938 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 11 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Flinty.

B. Attractive.

C. Round; plumpness.

D. Canis Minor (2 wds.)

E. Festive occasion with dancing (sl.)

F. Most famous of the Centaurs.

G. Of superior blood.

H. Not subdued.

I. Lively 17th and 18th century dance (in Bach's suites).

J. Turkish policeman.

K. Portrayed.

L. Unspeakable.

M. Isles, the seat of the Blessed (Class.)

N. Disseminates.

O. Exceeds in value or avoirdupois.

P. Volatile.

Q. Grandson of Mohammed the Prophet.

R. Unsubstantial image.

S. Applied to a fine 18th century brown glazed stoneware (Engl.)

T. Country dress or coarse cloth for it.

U. Sobbing sounds.

V. Pirates.

W. European art museum.

X. Algonquin Indians of Oklahoma and Wyoming.

Y. Screech (dial.)

WORDS

182 134 62 140 144 41

29 122 129 75 51 123 135 142 172

10 170 124 164 95 24 126

113 146 76 105 159 151 47 94 16

5 92 14 158 22 181 87

77 61 21 93 23 163

98 69 43 13 125 103 174 25

150 68 40 102 28 9 143

154 99 90 117 27 131 56 80

110 107 118 133 26 141 145

166 67 35 138 155 104

55 37 111 130 171 156 179 2 64

59 167 44 12 79 57 112 66 176

152 73 132 115 89 39 19

49 148 6 106 120 31 153 136 65

147 32 88 165 97 54 11

74 20 100 108 121 15

52 85 63 4 33 139 46

50 137 60 157 36 86 96 17 128 3

168 178 116 71 38 149

83 72 114 53 160

48 127 45 91 81 7 175 161

180 78 34 8 84 70

42 82 109 119 162 173 58 18 30

169 1 101 177

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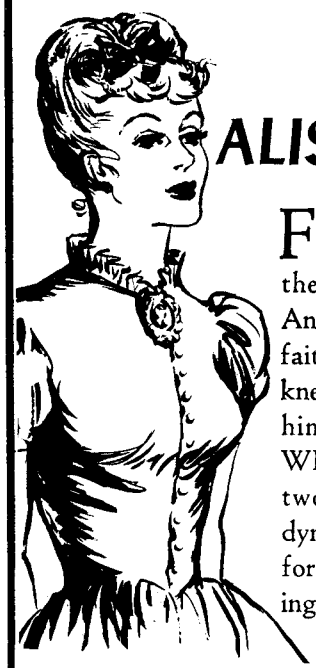

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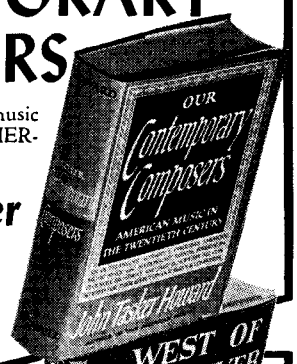

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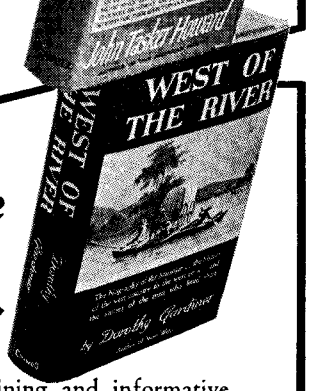

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